

BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE REPORT

SUBJECT: NHDOT Monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting

DATE OF CONFERENCE: July 17, 2013

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: John O. Morton Building

ATTENDED BY:

NHDOT

Christine Perron
Marc Laurin
Ron Grandmaison
Jon Hebert
Tony Weatherbee

EPA

Mark Kern

NHDES

Gino Infascelli
Lori Sommer

**NH Natural Heritage
Bureau**

Melissa Coppola

Public Participant

Steve Harriman

**Federal Highway
Administration**

Jamie Sikora

NH Coastal Program

Chris Williams

NH Fish & Game

Carol Henderson

The Smart Associates

Jennifer Riordan

(When viewing these minutes online, click on an attendee to send an e-mail)

PRESENTATIONS/ PROJECTS REVIEWED THIS MONTH:

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NOTES ON CONFERENCE:

Finalization of June Meeting Minutes

The June 19, 2013 meeting minutes were finalized. Minutes for Portsmouth-Kittery, 15731 were not yet included in the conference report when minutes were finalized. Minutes from that project will be finalized at a later date.

Littleton, Non-federal, 16390

Tony Weatherbee provided an overview of the project, which involves replacement of an existing structure in Littleton (Bridge # 223/057) that carries NH Route 116 over Palmer Brook. The structure consists of a single metal pipe at the inlet, a concrete box structure, a transition structure, and then two twin metal pipes at the outlet. The twin pipes are located under Route 116, the concrete transition structure and concrete box are under Lakewood School parking lot, and the single metal pipe is under Bishop Street. The only part of the structure that the Department owns is the section under Route 116 consisting of the twin metal pipes and the transition structure. The concrete box section was added when Lakewood School expanded their parking lot. This was done when the area was under an urban compact and therefore the Department was not consulted. The project proposes to replace the twin pipes and transition structure with a single concrete box to tie in with the existing concrete box.

Gino Infascelli asked about the size of the proposed box. T. Weatherbee said the box would be 8'x8', and a survey of the area is being completed to help to finalize the structure dimensions. G. Infascelli said that he had no objection with the proposed project and asked if the invert would match the streambed. T. Weatherbee said yes, the invert would match the streambed at the outlet.

Carol Henderson asked if the box would be embedded and T. Weatherbee replied that the invert would not be embedded. C. Henderson indicated that the area was considered a very productive brook trout area and Fish & Game had concerns with stream connectivity. T. Weatherbee commented that the existing box is not currently embedded. He added that the transition structure was under the school parking lot so the work would need to take place in the summer. C. Henderson noted that, from a fish biology point of view, summer is a good time of year to carry out the project.

Christine Perron commented that the Department was not planning to do a stream crossing assessment since only a portion of the overall structure would be replaced and the size of the replacement structure was limited by the size of the structure that would not be replaced. G. Infascelli commented that it would be fine to forego a stream crossing assessment, but he would like to see the ownership of the structure explained in the application package.

This project has not been previously discussed at a Monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting.

Seabrook, X-A000(293), 16444

Jon Hebert provided an update on the project. The project is located on US Route 1, beginning just south of NH Route 107 and continuing approximately 2000' to the south. The project proposes to widen Route 1 approximately 8 to 10 feet to the west to add an additional lane. As presented in October, the project will tie into the existing drainage system, which is currently closed drainage that outlets at two existing detention areas to the east of the project. There will be a slight increase in runoff, which the existing drainage system can handle.

At the Public Informational Meeting held in October 2012, town officials asked the Department to include a connector road between Pine Street and Autumn Way. The Department has agreed to incorporate this work into the project. The purpose of the connector road is to move traffic to the existing signal at the Pine Street/US Route 1 intersection in order to improve safety and traffic flow. The connector road would be 300 feet long and would join Autumn Way to Pine Street approximately 300 feet west of the existing signal. The portion of Autumn Way between US Route 1 and the new connector road would be discontinued, with approximately 7,775 sq ft of pavement removed. The new road would result in 7,300 sq ft of new pavement, resulting in a net decrease in overall pavement area. The project area is very flat. Runoff from the proposed road would be allowed to sheet flow and infiltrate along roadside swales. No wetlands were identified in the project area.

No concerns were raised about the project as now proposed.

This project was previously reviewed on the following dates: 10/17/2012.

Durham-Newmarket, STP-TE-X-5133(009), 13080

Ron Grandmaison handed out the draft mitigation proposal for discussion. The wetland impacts are to approximately one acre of wetlands and to turtle habitat. The ARM fund calculations would be \pm \$140,000; however, rather than just a straight in-lieu-fee, there has been coordination on-going with Fish and Game and DES regarding an appropriate mitigation package.

The proposed mitigation package consists of continued knotweed control along the NH Route 108 corridor, limiting tree clearing along the edge of the roadway, placing ballast along the highway in the "flats" to discourage turtles nesting along the side slopes, the upgrade of several culverts within the "flats" to provide for wildlife crossing use, and a lump sum payment to the ARM fund of \$105,000. The total costs for the mitigation would be \$317,000. As a result of the costs for its replacement, the Ellison Brook culvert enhancement is not included in this package. Also, the installation of turtle crossing warning signs can not be done, as FHWA has indicated that these signs are not approved for use as they do not depict a standard symbol. Carol Henderson postulated that Fish and Game would be exploring placing turtle crossing advisory signs on their properties. Jamie Sikora stated that if and when a standard is developed, FHWA could evaluate their placement within the ROW. Carol Henderson stated that the NH Fish and Game Director supports the mitigation package. Lori Sommer agreed that the DOT has proposed appropriate mitigation and that maybe the Ellison Brook enhancement could be a future project funded through the ARM fund. Mark Kern wondered if this would score high enough in the rating criteria to qualify, but it may be considered since it is the last remaining restriction for a wildlife corridor linking to the Lamprey River. R. Grandmaison will formally submit the proposed mitigation to DES and F&G, and now that the mitigation package is completed, the DOT will finalize the purchasing of the required easements on F&G properties.

Carol Henderson inquired about flooding concerns voiced by an adjacent property owner due to the proposed culvert upgrades in the "flats". Ron Grandmaison stated that DOT is still working on finalizing the hydraulics and hydrology by reviewing several studies and reports done by UNH, Wright-Pierce Engineers, and Gomez and Sullivan Engineers regarding the McCallum Dam and Oyster River projects. Indications are that there will not be an issue with flooding as the culverts are acting as equalizers and the proposed upgrades will not affect the hydrology.

Ron Grandmaison stated that the 13080A contract is presently scheduled to advertise on April 1, 2014. DOT is trying to move up the schedule, but this will depend on resolution of ROW issues. The wetland plans are underway and an application for a wetlands permit will be submitted in the near future. Lori Sommer

commented that the G&C approval process developed by DOT for the ARM fund disbursement went smoothly.

This project was previously reviewed on the following dates: 12/18/2002, 12/17/2003, 5/18/2005, 2/20/2008, 5/21/2008, 1/20/2010; 12/19/2012.